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REMARKS

Claims 1-8 were originally pending in this application. Claim 8 was withdrawn from consideration in view of a Restriction Requirement. New claims 9-13, based upon the original claims and the teachings of the original specification have been added herein. Thus, the pending claims herein are 1-7 and 9-13.

As recited in the claims, the present invention is directed to a self-treatment process and system for periodontal patients with gingival detachment of about 3 mm and greater comprising regularly removing biofilms from various supragingival, interproximal and subgingival surfaces, wherein "soft abrasives" are physically worked into the biofilms using toothbrushing, proxy brushing and flossing. As described in the specification as filed, the treatment process of the present invention includes three key elements:

1. Physically removing biofilm from supragingival tooth surfaces. This can preferably be accomplished by using a ribbed and grooved bristled biofilm therapy toothbrush in combination with complimentary soft abrasive toothpaste that is responsive to the ribbed and grooved bristles of the toothbrush and thereby removes more biofilm than traditional round bristle/toothpaste combination. Physical removal of biofilm can also be accomplished with slightly less effectiveness using traditional round bristles;
2. Physically removing biofilm from interproximal tooth surfaces. This can preferably be accomplished by using a ribbed and grooved bristle biofilm therapy proxy brush in combination with a complimentary soft abrasive containing proxy gel that is responsive to the ribbed and grooved

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bristles of the proxy brush. The combination thereby removes more interproximal biofilm than a traditional proxy brush used alone and reaches interproximal surfaces not reached by toothbrushing or rinsing. However, physical removal can also be accomplished with slightly less effectiveness using traditional round bristles; and

3. Physically removing biofilm from subgingival surfaces. This can be preferably accomplished by using a dental floss or dental tape containing a substantial quantity of releasable "soft abrasive" that, once released during flossing, can be worked onto interproximal and subgingival biofilms, found at those interproximal surfaces and not reached by toothbrushing, rinsing and/or proxy brushing.

The three elements of the biofilm therapy process of the present invention can be carried out in any sequence (clean the upper dental surfaces (supragingival); clean the surfaces between the teeth (interproximal); and clean below the exposed dental surfaces (subgingival)).

As for the "regular" period of such cleaning, the specification teaches that at least one of the three cleaning elements should be conducted at least once every day and preferably at least twice daily. Ideally, each of the three cleaning elements is carried out after every meal or snack. Some cleaning elements may be carried out more frequently than others.

Applicants hereby elect "chlorhexidine digluconate" as the species for the therapeutic substances recited in the claims. It is believed that allowance of the generic claims 4 and 5 will render moot the species requirement for claims 12 and 13.

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As for Claim 6, Applicants elect "texturized multifilament floss" as the species of the dental floss device for this claim. Applicants submit however, that the allowance of Claim 3, which includes the generic language "flossing device" will render moot the species requirement of Claim 6.

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In view of the amendments made herein, this rejection should be reconsidered and withdrawn. Such action is respectfully requested.

In claim 1 "regularly" is vague. The term has been deleted and replaced by "on a daily basis." The claim now requires daily cleaning of tooth surfaces defined therein, which is clear and definite.

In claims 1, 2 "sequentially" is vague. The term has been deleted. Applicants appreciate the helpful suggestion made by the Examiner. As stated in the specification, the order of cleaning is irrelevant.

In claims 1-4 "proxy" is vague. This term has been retained, as it is a term well known in the art. A traditional "proxy brush" is like a miniature bottle brush (see photo below):



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A proxy brush is used to clean the spaces between the teeth when flossing can't clean completely – e.g., around braces, the base of crowns, tight spaces, and/or crevices at the base of the tooth. In a preferred embodiment, the traditional proxy bristles (cylindrical with rounded tips) are replaced with a ribbed and grooved bristle as taught in the specification.

EXTENSION OF TIME PETITION

The initial response deadline for this filing was 20 August 2004. Applicant respectfully requests a one-month extension of that date, making the new deadline 20 September 2004.

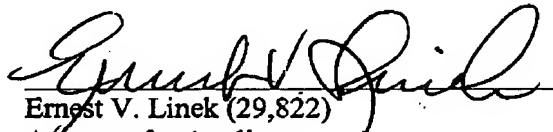
FEE AUTHORIZATION

Please charge all fees (extra claims, time extension, etc.) due in connection with this filing to Deposit Account No. 19-0733.

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence was submitted by facsimile in the USPTO on the date shown on Page 1.

Respectfully submitted,


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